

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

General Mills

Ohio Manufacturing Extension Partnership

General Mills Controls Employee Turnover To Control Costs

Client Profile:

General Mills is a publicly owned specialty frozen food manufacturer located in Wellston, Ohio. The processing plant located on the Wellston corporate campus employs approximately 475 people.

Situation:

General Mills recognizes that hiring and retaining qualified employees is a critical factor for its operational competitiveness, particularly in this rural region of Ohio. The company wanted to develop a better method of retaining its present workforce. General Mills contacted TechSolve, a NIST MEP network affiliate, for assistance.

Solution:

TechSolve referred General Mills to its partners at the Manufacturing Small Business Development Center (MSBDC) of Ohio State University (OSU). OSU representatives developed and conducted third-party exit interviews with former employees over several months. OSU also completed over 80 phone surveys and analyzed the feedback, searching for trends that might guide company policies and aid retention efforts. OSU verified its finding in four focus group meetings with current employees and presented its findings to General Mills. The study validated the effectiveness of certain employee programs and suggested areas for improvement. General Mills used these results to make effective changes to its employee retention program.

Results:

Reduced turnover at the facility by 5 percent since the beginning of this process.

Saved \$275,000 in direct and indirect hiring costs.

Testimonial:

"The new employees would feel nervous and said they did not feel welcome. So now we're putting together a mentor program. We hope new employees won't feel so overwhelmed, and we hope that will improve turnover. We're really excited to have this resource. [TechSolve's partner,] the Ohio State University MSBDC, is helping us pinpoint the reasons for employee turnover."

Liviu Vizitiu, Assistant Human Resources Manager

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